United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ In Presidential Statement, Security Council expresses grave concern at military offensive by Bosnian Croats at Mostar; strongly condems action "inconsistent with signature of Peace Plan"; demands guarantees for UNPROFOR's safety; reaffirms principle of territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ About 100 UNPROFOR troops expected to arrive in Zepa today to begin demilitarization and creation of "safe area"; fighting continues in Mostar between Bosnian Croats and Muslims.

+ Twenty-year goals should be set for States in such areas as maternal mortality, infant mortality and family planning, Secretary-General of 1994 International Conference on Population and Development tells planning Committee.

+ Security Council and General Assembly, at simultaneous meetings, elect Geza Herczegh of Hungary to fill vacancy at International Court of Justice.

+ Department of Public Information should promote United Nations as system of programmes and activities serving world's needs, Assistant Secretary-General tells Committee on Information; stresses need for dialogue and advocacy on behalf of Organization.

+ Co-Chairmen of Yugoslav Conference continue talks on Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia at Headquarters.

+ UNRWA Commissioner-General warns of substantial reduction in services to Palestinian refugees if contributions to alleviate deficit of Agency's $28.5 million are not forthcoming.

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The Security Council has expressed its grave concern at the major military offensive launched by Bosnian Croat para-military units in the areas of Mostar, Jablanica and Dreznica, and has strongly condemned such action

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which is "entirely inconsistent" with the signature by the Bosnian Croat side of the Peace Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In a Presidential Statement read out last night by Council President, Yuliy Vorontsov (Russian Federation), the Council reiterated its demand that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel in former Yugoslavia be allowed "unimpeded access" throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina and demanded that, in this particular case, the Bosnian Croat side guarantee the safety and the security of UNPROFOR, as well as all United Nations personnel, in the areas of fighting.

The Council has also called on the Government of Croatia to exert all its influence on the Bosnian Croat leadership and para-military units "with a view to ceasing immediately their attacks". It also reaffirmed the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the inacceptability of the acquisition of territory by force and the practice of "ethnic cleansing".

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About 100 United Nations troops are expected to arrive in Zepa today to begin the demilitarization and to create a "safe area" as called for by Security Council resolution 824 (1993) adopted on Thursday, 6 May. Five other Bosnian towns were also declared "safe" by the Council, namely Sarajevo, Bihac, Tuzla, Srebrenica and Goradze.

According to a press release issued by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) today, seven United Nations Observers who arrived in Zepa yesterday found the town badly damaged by artillery fire. Most of the population had fled to safety in nearby hills and forests where they had survived on food from airdrops organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Meanwhile, fighting continued today between forces of the Bosnian Croat Army and the Bosnian Presidency in all parts of the city of Mostar in south-west of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

UNPROFOR reported that the Bosnian Croat Army were moving hundreds of civilians by bus out of Mostar. United Nations Military Observers were trying to ascertain the possible location of detention centres but were restricted in their movements in and around Mostar by the Bosnian Croat Army.

UNPROFOR Commander Lars-Eric Wahlgren would ask the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to investigate the fate of the civilian population and would instruct Military Observers to make another attempt to enter Mostar, the press release said.

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Twenty-year goals should be set for all States in such areas as maternal mortality, infant mortality and family planning, Nafis Sadik (Pakistan),

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Secretary-General of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, told the Conference's Preparatory Committee today. The recommendations made by the Conference should be comprehensive, operational and visionary, she said.

Jean-Claude Milleron (France), Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, said socio-economic development thinking at the United Nations should be at the forefront of new global trends. Citing the increasing gap between the world's developed and developing regions, he said peace could only be guaranteed by development.

During its two-week session, the Preparatory Committee is expected to agree on the final document to be adopted by the Conference, which will take place in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994. The aim of the Conference is to widen freedom of choice in such matters as family size, population policy and development practices. The overall theme, as defined by the Economic and Social Council, is population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

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The Security Council and the General Assembly, at simultaneous meetings held this morning, have elected Géza Herczegh of Hungary as new member of the International Court of Justice, for a term expiring on 5 February, 1994.

An expert on international humanitarian law, Mr. Herczegh has served as governmental expert at several international conferences. He has been Judge of the Constitutional Court of Hungary since 1990.

The vacancy in the Court was caused by the death of Judge Manfred Lachs of Poland earlier this year.

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The Department of Public Information (DPI) should promote the United Nations as the premier mechanism for maintaining peace and security and as a system of programmes and activities serving the world's needs, Marco Vianello-Chiodo, Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, said today. In an address to the Committee on Information, which is holding its fifteenth session at Headquarters from 10 to 28 May, he also stressed the need for dialogue and for advocacy on behalf of the Organization.

The DPI must provide "speaking information", such as briefings and media services; "running information", such as live coverage and press releases; and "thinking information", including information programmes, Mr. Vianello-Chiodo said. The goal was to heighten awareness of the principles, messages and values of the United Nations, to bring about a dialogue with the public, and to receive feedback in order to better focus its products. To that end, a process of "realignment", rather than of "restructuring", was underway in the Department, he said.

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During its session, the Committee will consider reports highlighting the lack of resources for implementing General Assembly requests for United Nations information activities. It will also discuss the implementation of the March 1992 decision of the Secretary-General that the operations of United Nations Information Centres should be integrated with those of the field offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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Cyrus Vance, the outgoing Co-Chairman of the International Conference on former Yugoslavia, met this morning with President Gligorov of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, according to a United Nations spokesman today.

Mr. Vance and the other Co-Chairman, Lord Owen, would meet tomorrow and Wednesday with representatives of the Greek Government for a final round of negotiations. Lord Owen was about to return to London from Brussels, having attended the European Community Council of Ministers meeting today, regarding the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He is due in New York tomorrow.

Thorvald Stoltenberg, the new Co-Chairman replacing Mr. Vance, would be in Geneva tomorrow for meetings with Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) General Lars-Eric Wahlgren, Deputy Chief of Mission Cedric Thornberry and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata.

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The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) will have to cut services substantially unless a deficit of $28.5 million is alleviated, UNRWA Commissioner-General Ilter Turkmen has warned. He was speaking at UNRWA's informal meeting of Governments held in Vienna on 6 and 7 May.

The Agency's finances had been further strained by the Israeli Government's closure of the occupied territory, and the economic, social and security situation there was worse than ever, Mr. Turkmen said. Unemployment was almost 50 per cent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and violence was increasing. From 1 December 1992 to 4 May, 74 Palestinians had been killed.

Mr. Turkmen appealed for donations of flour, rice and sugar for emergency relief in the occupied territory, and for money to meet the housing and health needs of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

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